

§ 3212.16

years (120 months, whether consecutive or not).

(2) For leases issued before August 8, 2005, for which no election is made under § 3200.7(a)(2), and for leases issued in response to applications pending on August 8, 2005, for which no election is made under § 3200.8(b)(1), your lease will remain in effect if, during the period in which there is no production you:

(i) Continue to make minimum royalty payments as specified in § 3211.21(b) of this part;

(ii) Maintain a well capable of production in commercial quantities;

(iii) Continue to make diligent efforts to utilize the geothermal resource; and

(iv) Satisfy any other applicable requirements.

(b) The Secretary:

(1) Requires or causes the cessation of production; or

(2) Determines that the cessation in production is required or otherwise caused by:

(i) The Secretary of the Air Force, Army, or Navy;

(ii) A state or a political subdivision of a state; or

(iii) Force majeure.

(c) The discontinuance of production is caused by the performance of maintenance necessary to maintain operations. Such maintenance is considered a production activity, not a cessation of production, and maintenance may include activities such as overhauling your power plant, re-drilling or re-working wells that are critical to plant operation, or repairing and improving gathering systems or transmission lines, that necessitate the discontinuation of production. You must obtain BLM approval by submitting a Geothermal Sundry Notice if the activity will require more than one calendar month, for it to be classified as maintenance under this paragraph. The BLM must receive the Geothermal Sundry Notice before the end of the first calendar month in which there will be no production.

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§ 3212.16 Can I apply to BLM to reduce, suspend, or waive the royalty or rental of my lease?

(a) You may apply for a suspension, reduction, or waiver of your rent or royalty for any lease or portion thereof. BLM may grant your request in the interest of conservation and to encourage the greatest ultimate recovery of geothermal resources, if we determine that:

(1) Granting the request is necessary to promote development; or

(2) You cannot successfully operate the lease under its current terms.

(b) BLM will not approve a rental or royalty reduction, suspension, or waiver unless all rental or royalty interest owners other than the United States accept a similar reduction, suspension, or waiver.

§ 3212.17 What information must I submit when I request that BLM suspend, reduce, or waive my royalty or rental?

(a) Your request for suspension, reduction, or waiver of the royalty or rental must include all information BLM needs to determine if the lease can be operated under its current terms, including:

(1) The type of reduction you seek;

(2) The serial number of your lease;

(3) The names and addresses of the lessee and operator;

(4) The location and status of wells;

(5) A summary of monthly production from your lease; and

(6) A detailed statement of expenses and costs.

(b) If you are applying for a royalty or rental reduction, suspension, or waiver, you must also provide to BLM a list of names of royalty and rental interest owners other than the United States, the amounts of royalties or payments out of production and rent paid to them, and every effort you have made to reduce these payments.

§ 3212.18 What are the production incentives for leases?

You will receive a production incentive in the form of a temporary 50 percent reduction in your royalties under MMS regulations at 30 CFR 218.307 if:

(a) Your lease was in effect prior to August 8, 2005;

(b) You do not convert the royalty rates of your lease under § 3212.25;

(c) By August 7, 2011, production from or allocated to your lease is utilized for commercial production in a:

(1) New facility (see § 3212.22); or

(2) Qualified expansion project (see § 3212.21); and

(d) The production from your lease is used for the commercial generation of electricity.

§ 3212.19 How do I apply for a production incentive?

Submit to BLM a written request for a production incentive describing a project that may qualify as a new facility or qualified expansion project. Identify whether you are requesting that the project be considered as a new facility (see § 3212.22) or as a qualified expansion project (see § 3212.21) and explain why your project qualifies under these regulations. The request must be received no later than August 7, 2011.

§ 3212.20 How will BLM review my request for a production incentive?

(a) BLM will review your request on a case-by-case basis to determine whether your project meets the criteria for a qualified expansion project under § 3212.21 or a new facility under § 3212.22. If it does not meet the criteria for the type of project you requested, we will determine whether it meets the criteria for the other type of production incentive project.

(b) If BLM determines that you have a qualified expansion project, we will, as part of our approval, provide you with a schedule of monthly target net generation amounts that you must exceed to qualify for the production incentive. These amounts will quantify the required 10 percent increase in net generation over the projected net generation without the project. The schedule will be specific to the facility or facilities that are affected by the project and will cover the 48-month time period during which your production incentive may apply.

(c) If BLM determines that you have met the criteria for a new facility, we will provide you with written notification of this determination.

§ 3212.21 What criteria establish a qualified expansion project for the purpose of obtaining a production incentive?

A qualified expansion project must meet the following criteria:

(a) It must involve substantial capital expenditure. Examples include the drilling of additional wells, retrofitting existing wells and collection systems to increase production rates, retrofitting turbines or power plant components to increase efficiency, adding additional generation capacity to existing plants, and enhanced recovery projects such as augmented injection. Projects that are not associated with substantial capital expenditure, such as opening production valves and operating existing equipment at higher rates, do not qualify as expansion projects.

(b) The project must have the potential to increase the net generation by more than 10 percent over the projected generation without the project, using data from the previous 5 years. If 5 years of data are not available, it is not a qualified expansion project.

§ 3212.22 What criteria establish a new facility for the purpose of obtaining a production incentive?

(a) Criteria for determining whether a project is a new facility for the purpose of obtaining a production incentive include:

(1) The project requires a new site license or facility construction permit if it is on Federal lands;

(2) The project requires a new Commercial Use Permit;

(3) The project includes at least one new turbine-generator unit;

(4) The project involves a new sales contract;

(5) The project involves a new site or substantially larger footprint; and

(6) The project is not contiguous to an existing project.

(b) Generally, a new facility will not:

(1) Be permitted only with a Geothermal Drilling Permit;

(2) Be constructed entirely within the footprint of an existing facility; or

(3) Involve only well-field projects such as drilling new wells, increasing injection, and enhanced recovery projects.